

Revelation

Revelation 15 and 16: The Bowl Judgments

Introduction

- A. These chapter present the final outpouring of God's wrath before the return of Christ.
 1. They conclude events of chapter 10 through 15 concerning visions in heaven and conditions on the earth up to the middle of the tribulation period.
 2. They serve as an introduction to the "**Great Tribulation**" or the latter half of the tribulation period.
 3. They give us important truths about the ***wrath of God***.
- B. There are a lot of moving parts, with angels and saints going about their business.
 1. Seven angels ready to act.
 2. Tribulation saints engaged in worship.
 3. Heavenly Temple opened and the "**living creatures**" ready to distribute the "**bowls**."
- C. God has inflicted judgements before:
 1. Tower of Babel.
 2. Universal flood.
 3. Sodom and Gomorrah.
 4. Israel for 2,000 years.

REVELATION FIFTEEN: PRELUDE TO BOWL JUDGMENTS

- A. **Those who are victorious over the Beast!** 15:1-3
 1. This is the third of three great signs. 15:1
 - Sun-clothed woman (Israel). 12:1
 - The great red dragon (Satan). 12:3
 - Seven angels with seven plagues. 15:1
 2. John's method of stating and re-stating.
 3. Seven angels having seven last plagues.

- ***“Then, if you walk contrary to Me, and are not willing to obey Me, I will bring on you seven times more plagues.”*** Leviticus 26:21
 - God’s judgment on a ***disobedient*** world.
4. ***“For in them the wrath of God is complete.”*** 15:1.
 - There are two words for wrath or anger in Biblical Greek:
 - “Thymos”: a violent, passion to stand up to injustice.
 - “Orge”: it is not explosive rage or hostile.
 - Here the wrath (thymos) of God will fulfill His purpose.
 5. Only those who reject the Bible deny the fact that God is wrathful on account of sin.

B. A multitude on the sea of glass. 15:2

1. What John saw was a transparent crystal platform before God’s throne, shimmering and listening like a tranquil sunlit sea.
2. Those who were victorious over the Beast are tribulation martyrs. 7:9-17
3. “Having harps of God.”

C. Their songs of praise. 15:3-4

1. They will sing two songs: the Song of Moses (Exodus 15) and the Song of the Lamb (Revelation 5).
2. Both songs extol God’s character as the omnipotent, immutable, sovereign, perfect and righteous creator, and judge.
3. We are invited to listen as both songs:
 - ***Praise God’s works*** (great and marvelous are your works).
 - ***Praise God’s way*** (just and true are your ways).
 - ***Praise God’s worthiness*** (who shall not fear you, O Lord, and glorify you name?)
 - ***Praise God in worship*** (all nations shall come and worship before you).
4. In a day when men are confused about who Jesus is, heaven is not confused at all.

D. Seven angels are given seven bowls of judgments. 15:5-8

1. ***“The Temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven.”***
 - This refers to the heavenly reality of the tabernacle, not the earthly.

- Exodus 25:8-9 and Hebrews 8:9.
2. ***“Out of the Temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues.”***
 - It is significant that they come directly from the heavenly temple.
 - This is the third time we have seen a group of seven angels.
 3. The bowls are given, and the cloud of God’s glory fills the temple. 15:7-8
 - These bowls are flat like the saucers used ritually in the sacrifices.
 - The glory cloud will remain in the temple until the earth is completely purged and prepared for the King and His Kingdom.
 4. Since Calvary, the way into the holiest in heaven has been opened to all. Now for a brief time the road is barred.
 5. Worship of God is a moral obligation.

REVELATION SIXTEEN: THE BOWL JUDGMENTS

A. The judgment commanded. 16:1

1. These judgments are like the seal and trumpet judgments but different in the degree of devastation.
2. The first three judgments are poured in quick succession. There is an interlude and then the next three are poured out and then another interlude and then the final judgments are poured out.
3. Each of these Interludes are a time of praise and worship of God.

B. The first three plagues. 15:2-7

1. *Cancel of the mark of the beast. (v.2)*
2. *Corruption of the sea. (v.3)*
3. *Corruption of the freshwater streams. (4-7)*

C. Then comes the first interlude. (v.5-7)

1. It is a hymn spoken by these angels saying that God is just in His actions.
2. Man considers all retribution to be evil, but sin has its consequences.

D. The second three plagues. 16:8-14

1. *Catastrophe of the sun. (v.8-9)*

2. *A direct attack on the domain of the beast. (v.10-11)*

3. *A directive for battle. (v. 12-16)*

E. **Then comes the second interlude.** (v.15)

1. Amid the horrors of judgment, deception and war come a word of encouragement to believers.

2. The people are told to be ready, walking circumspectly and avoiding contamination from the world.

3. This watchfulness is evidence of preparedness.

F. **The seventh and final plague.** (17-21).

1. The first part of the plague is a disruption in the atmosphere, especially with storms.

2. But it will also disrupt the earth with the worst earthquake ever known. (Matthew 7:51-54).

3. The great city (Jerusalem) is split into three parts.

4. Zechariah 14 teaches us that this earthquake is in preparation for the millennial kingdom to be set up.

5. Mount of Olives will be split and a new valley running east, and west will be created.

6. A spring of water will flow from Jerusalem (14:8).

7. Jerusalem will be elevated, and the surrounding region will be flattened into a plain. (Zechariah 14:10).

8. This is enhancement.

9. Then follows another atmospheric disturbance, not on the earth but upon man. They will be pelted with hailstones.

G. **Men will still not repent.**